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An examination of factors influencing emotional and social wellbeing in Irish post-primary schools

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Rationale for Research

- ◇ Consideration for wellbeing in school gaining international prominence
- ◇ Recent introduction of NCCA wellbeing guidelines in Ireland
- ◇ Gap in literature regarding educators' attitudes and opinions

Research Parameters

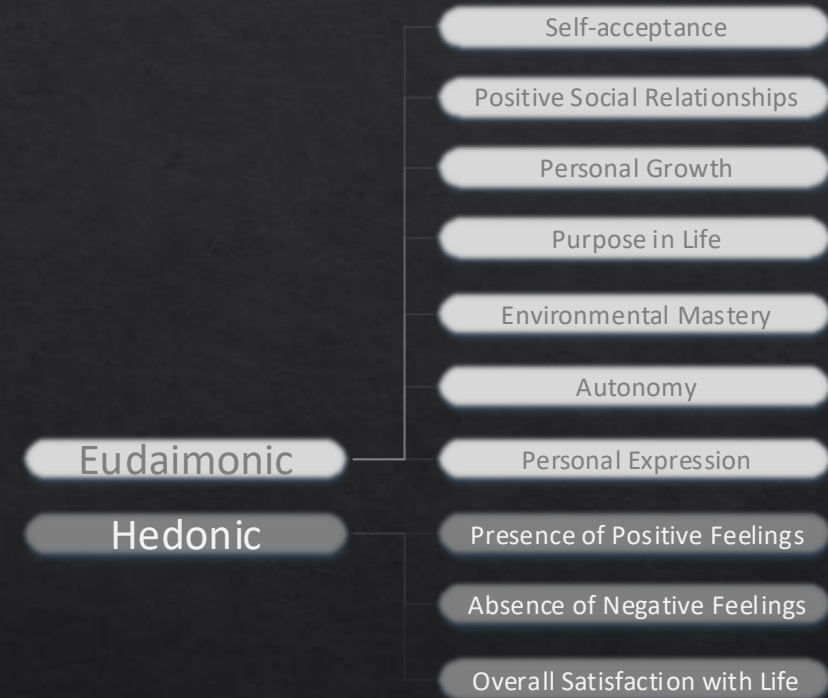
◇ Operationalising Wellbeing

◇ Hedonic tradition

- ◇ Emphasise positive outcomes/avoid negative outcomes
- ◇ Objective goal orientation

◇ Eudaimonic Tradition

- ◇ Achieve equilibrium between positive and negative affect
- ◇ Subjective pursuit of self-actualisation



Adapted from Diener (2009) and Ryff (1989)

Research Parameters

◇ Scope of research

- ◇ Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) interventions exist on three common scales:
 - ◇ Universal – Applicable to all students
 - ◇ Selective – Sub-group identified via one or more risk factors (e.g. ethnic minorities)
 - ◇ Indicated – Individuals demonstrating early signs of problem behaviours
- ◇ Wellbeing guidelines represent a universal SEL intervention
- ◇ Individual consideration for race, ethnicity, non-binary gender etc. would suggest a selective indication
- ◇ Variables should be applicable to all students for consideration within research

Significant Findings within Literature

- ◇ Many factors act upon student wellbeing
 - ◇ Student/teacher relationship
 - ◇ Peer relationships
 - ◇ Urban/rural context

- ◇ Wellbeing is gendered
 - ◇ Girls tend to present with lower measures of wellbeing than boys
 - ◇ Implications for co-education vs gender segregation

- ◇ Teachers may feel under-prepared or uncomfortable in delivering the wellbeing curriculum
 - ◇ “Wellbeing in school starts with the staff” (NCCA 2017 p. 29)
 - ◇ Ability may not reflect self-efficacy

Research Questions

- ◊ What are the attitudes and opinions of educators towards the promotion of students' wellbeing in Irish secondary schools?
- ◊ What issues or barriers do educators believe pertain to the development of students' wellbeing in Irish secondary schools?
- ◊ What are the attitudes and opinions of second level educators towards the current wellbeing guidelines published by the NCCA?
- ◊ What changes, if any, do educators believe should be made to the second level curriculum to ensure the optimal promotion of students' wellbeing?

Methodology

- ◇ Sequential mixed-methods design
 - ◇ Phase one – Quantitative survey of teachers attitude/opinions regarding wellbeing
 - ◇ Phase two – Stratified focus groups

- ◇ Ontology & Epistemology
 - ◇ Interpretive Constructivism
 - ◇ Reality is multiple and relative
 - ◇ Better facilitates the understanding of educators' subjective opinions and underlying schema

Impact/Outcomes

- ◆ Facilitate educators' ability and comfort in delivering wellbeing curriculum
- ◆ Identify areas for possible refinement within NCCA guidelines
- ◆ Highlight areas of potential improvement with regard to greater wellbeing curriculum

Thank You!

